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WELCOME TO Facets

Facet - 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.
2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

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COVER PHOTO BY: Nirmalendu Majumdar/Facets

Women working on the emerging chapter of the Gift of Adoption Fund are from left, standing, Kay Marner, Karen Ravenscroft and Cherie Torresi; sitting is Kris Peters.

LIFE HAS
ITS MOMENTS...

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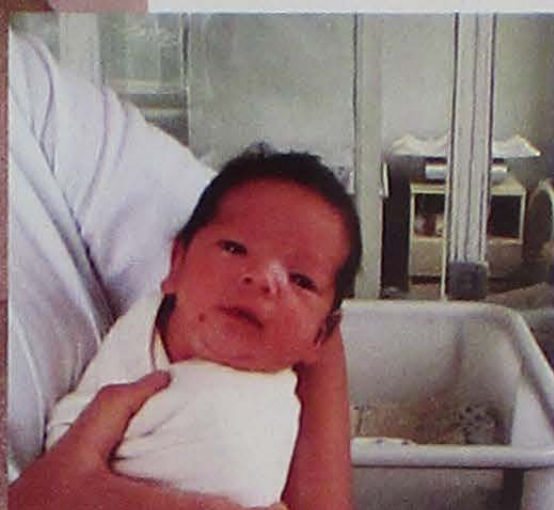
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Adopting a daughter fulfills a DREAM



Kris Peters, of Ames, along with five other women, is in the process of establishing an Iowa chapter of the Gift of Adoption Fund. Peters is director of operations for Global State Mortgage Inc. She adopted her daughter from Kazakhstan in 1999. In her own words, here is her story.

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I'm often asked if I was scared when I left for Kazakhstan to get my daughter. In looking back, I can understand why they might ask, but quite frankly, I was never afraid. I was on a mission. I was doing what any parent would do. I was doing whatever I needed to do to get my daughter home.

I always knew that I wanted to be a parent. I assumed that I would follow the traditional path ... college, job, husband, house and kids. When Mr. Right didn't show up, my desire to be a parent didn't end. I still knew I was meant to be a parent, and almost 10 years later I have no doubt that this little girl I call LuLuBelle — her real name is Emmerson — was always meant to be my child.

I started the adoption process in June. I was living in the Chicago suburbs at the time I started and completed my home study. I started

“When Mr. Right didn't show up, my desire to be a parent didn't end.”

working with an agency in Florida, and through my research on international adoption had selected Guatemala as my country of choice. It was between Guatemala and Kazakhstan as they allowed for adoption of the baby at a younger age, but Guatemala was the choice as you only had to be in-country for a weekend.

I started working with the facilitator for the Guatemalan program. All my documentation was in and I was on my way to becoming a parent when I received the phone call that changed everything. As is common in international adoption, countries change their rules on international adoption often, and the country of Guatemala was “in flux” and the program was closed for now. But as that door closed, another one opened.

The facilitator for Guatemala had talked to the facilitators for Kazakhstan and there was a baby in Kokchetau, Kazakhstan, who needed a parent. Not only did she need a parent, but she needed a parent quickly because in this region of Kazakhstan if you didn't get the baby from the maternity hospital before they were 5-months old, they were not eligible for international adoption and would be raised in an orphanage.

That same day I was e-mailed a picture of a newborn along with her medical report. This was my daughter, no question. This little red-faced girl with a ton of dark hair and a large strawberry birthmark on her chin, no matter what, was my daughter. I got on the phone. I talked to my family. I talked to my work. And then I talked to the adoption facilitators and told them I would do whatever it took to get my child home.

On Nov. 5, 1999, after several chaotic weeks of getting the paperwork through all the correct channels, and with a moneybelt strapped to my waist, I left Chicago. My first stop was New York, and then Moscow where I was picked up by my contacts there. I slept for several hours

Continued on page 6

The Gift of Adoption Fund

By MARY HALSTRUM
Facets Editor

Angelina Jolie, John McCain, Madonna, Jamie Lee Curtis and Mia Farrow have something in common — they have all adopted children. Unfortunately, not everyone has the financial resources, like these celebrities do, to pursue their dream of adopting a child. In fact, sometimes adopting a child can nearly bankrupt an adoptive family.



The national chapter of the Gift of Adoption Fund was established by Gene and Lucy Wyka in 1996, to provide grants to qualified adoptive parents. Currently there are three emerging state chapters including Iowa, Colorado and Ohio.

According to the Gift of Adoption Fund's Web site, www.giftofadoption.org, adoption is the gift of a lifetime. It brings new life to parentless children; new hope to the childless, and joy to families that extends through generations. The Gift of Adoption Fund turns the dream of adoption into reality for those who could not otherwise afford to adopt.

How does it function? Prospective adoptive parents can apply for grants of \$500 to \$7,500 to assist them in adopting a child either from within the United States or internationally.

The emerging Iowa chapter needs to raise \$10,000 to become operational. According to Kris Peters, one of the founding members, the money will be raised by holding four events per year. The first, a special showing of "The Wizard of Oz," is set for Sunday, April 26 at 1 p.m. at the

Ames City Auditorium, 515 Clark Ave. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. All proceeds raised will benefit the Gift of Adoption Fund's emerging Iowa chapter. For more information, call (515) 441-0547.

Other women involved in establishing the Iowa chapter of the Gift of Adoption Fund:

• **Cherie Torresi** is a licensing and support specialist serving foster and adoptive families for Lutheran Services in Iowa and Iowa KidsNet. She and her husband Brian have three children, Gabriella, 9, Jacob, 6, and Eliana, 18 months.

"I'm motivated by the tremendous amount of love that flows through the lives of every individual influenced by the smile of a child," she said.

• **Karen Ravencroft** is an independent strategic marketing consultant with a special interest in working with nonprofit organizations. She is married to Bob, and they have two children, Emma, 17, and Paige, 9.

"I feel fortunate to be able to put my 15 years of marketing experience and my passion for family to work for a worthy cause like The Gift of Adoption Fund, Ravencroft said. "For me, motherhood is both a challenging and rewarding role, one that I cannot imagine my life without. I share the passion of The Gift of Adoption Fund to do something concrete to move a child from a dire situation into a life of hope and promise."

• **Julie Schroeder** and her husband Mark have four children, three of which are adopted.

"We were resource family parents (foster care) for five years," she said. "I was a resource family licensing and support specialist for Iowa KidsNet at Youth and Shelter Services until becoming the post adoption specialist for the Ames Service Area for Iowa on March 1. I work with families who have subsidized adoptions through the state of Iowa."

• Freelance writer and mom **Kay Marner** and her husband Don have two children, Aaron, 12, the couple's biological child, and Natalie, 8, who was adopted from Russia in 2003.

"When we first decided to pursue adoption, I started researching online, and found a for-profit adoption agency in Iowa, and contacted them for information," she said. "When I saw that the cost would be around \$30,000, we decided we couldn't pursue it. Then, several months later I saw an ad in the paper for an informational meeting that Children's Hope International — the agency we ended up using — was having in Des Moines. We decided to go just to see if their costs were any less. They were somewhat less, but mainly, we just couldn't let go of the idea of adopting. We ended up spending between \$25 to 30K. We cashed in most of the 401(k) plan from my 16 years of work at the Richmond Center and took out a second mortgage on our house. That first year I was afraid we'd have to file for bankruptcy. With so many people out there who want to be parents, and so many kids who need homes, it's a shame that the cost of adopting has to stand in the way. I hope that the Iowa chapter of GOAF can put adoption within reach for more families."



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Continued from page 4

in an apartment in Moscow until they took me back to the airport for my flight to Almaty. The local facilitators in Almaty, two sisters, picked me up at the airport and drove me to the apartment I would be living in for the next four weeks. Almaty was more urban than I realized it would be, but very much a former Soviet nation as the apartment was very much like you would see in movies about Russia.

For the next two days I slept and got familiar with my surroundings. On Monday, Nov. 8, the sisters picked me up and we went to the airport to catch a flight to Kokshetau. The airplane was something like you would see in an old World War II movie, definitely no bells and whistles, but then I really didn't need any. I just wanted to get to my daughter.

It was late in Kokshetau when we finally arrived. I truly don't remember why it was so late, but I know that it was dark and all I really remember were these large pipes that wound themselves around the city. The maternity hospital was old and dark. The doctor and several nurses met us when we got there and we wound our way up some stairs to a room with about six clear baby "baskets." There were three babies, two boys and a girl. Two lay swaddled in blankets in their baskets. The third, my daughter, had been dressed in a onesie with little red and green crocheted booties. I expected her to be tiny, but she was 3 1/2-months-old and had grown. The doctors and nurses had taken good care of her.

They handed her to me, and while a bit surreal, it felt absolutely perfect. She smiled at them as they talked to her in Russian. With her chubby little cheeks, she was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen.

I had to leave her for the night. The sisters and I went to a local motel. It wasn't the typical hotel we would find here, but it had a bed and I did the best I could to sleep. The next morning we returned to the hospital with the clothes that I had brought for her that included the hat that I was told I especially needed as the Kazakh people were never without a hat. I diapered and dressed her, wrapped her up in her blanket and we headed back to the airport for our plane back to Almaty.

We lived in our apartment, just she and I, for the next two weeks. We slept, we ate, we watched British television, we strolled the sidewalks a bit, and we just hung out and got to know each other. For those two weeks we waited to go back to Kokshetau for our hearing where the judge would officially make her mine. The day we went back to Kokshetau, we stopped in Astana and then took an overnight train to Kokshetau. I left my new baby girl with babysitters that the sisters had set up, and went back to the airport with a couple who had just arrived in Almaty to go get the little boy I had met on my last trip.

When we got to the maternity hospital, I got to watch as they met their son for the first time. We ate lunch, soup as I recall, at the maternity hospital and I helped one of the other newborns ... so tiny, while we waited to

go to the courthouse. The judge was a woman, dressed in a very regal robe and hat, and I stood in front of her with one of the sisters, as she spoke in Russian. I don't remember what questions she even asked although there weren't many. When she was done speaking, the sister walked me back out in the hallway and told me that all was approved. I started crying. It was the only time I stopped my "mission" to just enjoy the moment.

The couple, the sister and I went out to eat that night and we all did a shot of vodka to celebrate. To this day, every Nov. 22, we do a shot of vodka to celebrate Adoption Day.

We went back to the airport, the couple and their baby, the sister and I to get back to Almaty. But as happens in Kazakhstan, the airport didn't have any fuel and we couldn't get an airplane. The train was the only other option; a train right out of an old movie with no heat and rural Kazakh people and it seemed as if we were living decades ago.

While all of the paperwork was processed, the documents translated into English and her Kazakh passport completed, we lived in our apartment for nine more days. It was more nerve-racking than the rest of the time because all I wanted to do was get home, but I needed the word that it was OK to go.

We flew back through Moscow as we needed to go to the American Embassy to get the paperwork that would allow us back in the States. The room was full of families who had adopted in the region trying to get their paperwork. We were very close. I got my packet of papers and headed for an overnight in a Moscow hotel, a much-improved setting than the hotel in Kokshetau but still just a stop on the way home.

We got to the airport the next morning, all our bags packed with our papers in hand. Somehow you feel like they're not going to let you through and on the plane, but they did. The flight we were on was nicknamed the "baby flight" as there were lots of families going back to the states with their new children. I got lucky. The plane was full, but I got a seat near the restroom in the back with an empty seat beside me so I didn't have to spend the full 10-hour flight with a baby on my lap. I also had a very nice woman sitting across from me who would hold her while I had to visit the facilities. She slept most of the way back and we landed in New York.

We survived the trip back through customs and I started to truly believe that no one was going to take her away from me. We boarded a plane back to Chicago where I knew my parents and sister would be waiting. I changed her into a cute new outfit so she would be all ready to meet her new family. She spit up as we had to buckle up for landing. And if I hadn't mentioned it, I had gotten a horrible cold in the previous few days, so when we landed neither of us looked or smelled too great.

But it didn't matter. We were home, happy, and ready to start our lives together.

Mothers ...

how does your diet check out?

AMY CLARK, RD, LD

National Women's Health Week kicks off on Mother's Day. This is a week for mothers to take time and concentrate on themselves and their well-being. Start by asking yourself this question, "Do you know the top health risks for women?"

Here are the top health conditions among women:

- One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime.
- One in five females in the U.S. has some form of heart disease. A woman can reduce her risk of dying from a heart attack by up to 82 percent if she leads a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly.
- Mental disorders are the leading cause of disability in the United States and women are twice as likely as men to suffer from depression.
- Women have nine times more eating disorders than men.

Dietitian Amy Clark asks you, "How does your diet check out? What can you do to stave off some of these health conditions?"

Eating right is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Follow some of these tips to help improve your health and reduce your health risk.

- Try to get a variety every day of nutrient-packed foods.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables. Choose ones richest in color, which usually indicates more vitamins and minerals. Eat more dark green veggies, such as broccoli, kale and other dark leafy greens. Look for the orange color in carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin and winter squash.
- Get calcium from foods rich in calcium: skim or low-fat dairy products or calcium-fortified foods. Vitamin D is important for calcium absorption and many other health benefits. Food sources for Vitamin D include fatty fish (like salmon, tuna, mackerel and sardines), liver and cod liver oil, egg yolks, fortified foods like commercially available milk, fortified cereal, bread and orange juice.
- Increase fiber with whole grains. Eat plenty of soluble fiber, which may help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol. Find soluble fiber in oat bran, oatmeal, beans, peas, rice bran, barley, citrus fruits and strawberries.
- Plant sterols or stanols are believed to



lower serum cholesterol by inhibiting the absorption of cholesterol in the small intestine. Plant sterols are found in small quantities in vegetable oils and grain products such as corn, rye and wheat. Look for margarine spreads, like Smart Balance HeartRight and Benecol, which have added plant sterols.

- Go lean with protein choices. Vary your dietary protein by eating fish, beans and nuts.
- Avoid saturated fats, trans fats and excessive sugar and salt.
- Incorporate heart-healthy fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids found in salmon, walnuts and flax seed. Monounsaturated fats are found in canola, olive and peanut oils and are thought to raise HDL (good) cholesterol and lower LDL (bad) cholesterol.
- If overweight, choose a calorie level that enables you to shed pounds. Increasing exercise will speed the process and may help to boost your mood.
- Limit alcohol to one drink per day.
- Get plenty of rest and relaxation to soothe the stresses we deal with every day.

There's no time like the present to start taking time for yourself and concentrating on your health. Start with these tips to build a healthy lifestyle and most important, maintain your health so for years to come you can enjoy time with your family.

Try this refreshing, nutritious and light meal.

Chicken Spinach Mango Wrap Sandwiches

Serves 6 (1 wrap each)

All you need:

2 fresh mangos, peeled and sliced
Half of a 10-oz pkg spinach leaves
6 oz cooked chicken breast strips
1/4 cup sliced almonds
1/4 cup light raspberry vinaigrette
6 (8-inch each) flour tortillas

All you do:

1. In a large bowl, combine mango slices, spinach, chicken, almonds and vinaigrette. Toss gently.
2. Place mango mixture down center of each tortilla. Roll up tightly. Cut each in half diagonally to serve.

Nutrition information per serving:
Calories: 290; Cholesterol: 20 mg; Dietary Fiber: 4 g;
Fat: 8 g; Protein: 14 g; Saturated Fat: 1.5 g; Sodium:
460 mg; Sugar: 13 g; Trans fats: 0 g

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The mother of all exercise

By DEBRA ATKINSON, MS, CSCS

If necessity is the Mother of Invention, then exercise may be the greatest invention of a mother. If Before Children (BC) exercise is viewed as a vehicle for physical change; a way to manipulate or outwit Mother Nature herself, After Dependents (AD) exercise for the women of Central Iowa becomes oh so much more.

When "why can't I have the red cup? He had the red cup yesterday?" becomes too much to handle, mom's like Deb Ordal know it's time to make exercise a higher priority.

"When I take care of myself and keep my battery charged, I maintain better perspective and can recognize (those things) for the minor issues that they really are," Ordal, mother of a four and a five year old, reports. Physical exercise impacts her overall mental and emotional health. Even though most moms won't volunteer it, they'll almost all agree that it's easy to start resenting some of the (parenting) activities that keep them busy. "When I take the time to go for a walk or head to the gym I actually end up enjoying my "mom activities" even more because I realize it doesn't have to be an all or nothing kind of deal."

Amen. It's not that this concept is so hard; it's just so easy to get caught up in a narrow focus, or the mother's perfection. You know the one; June Cleaver never had sweats on once, did she? There's that little voice inside that says you should love this time. Guilt is the gift that just keeps on giving.

Mothering yourself

Like the concept of putting on your oxygen mask first, you may just find the hour to yourself is the best gift you can give to those you're feeling you leave behind if you take exercise time for yourself, and as a result, have a renewed outlook. It could be that not only do you need the exercise, they need you to exercise. Jody Bennett, mother of four, admits that her family will ask if she's trained that day if she seems a

little cranky. They've learned it's a part of life in their household and are even jumping on the bandwagon with the same language as if regular exercise is as common as breakfast and brushing your teeth.

The science behind the Art of Mothering Yourself

During times of stress, levels of the stress hormone cortisol accumulate. It doesn't have to be a fatal illness or a fire; small daily stressors can also add up. The dishwasher broke down, or the dog chewed your favorite rug, make the sippy cup color suddenly a big deal. Cortisol causes tissue breakdown. Without a way to rid the body of cortisol the body must live with it that way. You can liken that to not brushing your teeth and the increased chance of developing a cavity. With enough stress, enough time and the wrong set of genetic or environmental conditions, disease has a heyday. You can purge some cortisol with exercise. Since we don't have to "fight or flight" for survival any more, exercise is the next best thing to having to run for your life. For some, it is running for a better life.

Enter endorphins. Like Dorothy in the poppy field, you feel wonderfully relaxed with endorphins, even though the wicked witch and flying monkeys have been chasing you. For women, serotonin and oxytocin also play a part in feeling good. Like exercise, socializing with friends and sunshine can increase serotonin production. Combine exercise with social outings and you've got a great little AD cocktail without the hangover.

Increasing your resilience and enhancing your coping skills may help determine your success at motherhood. Most mothers agree it is the hardest job you'll ever love. From comedians to best-selling authors and child rearing experts there is no lack of quips, quotes, or respect for the never-ending job of a mother.

Mother May I... take myself to the gym and get my daily fix? Yes, please do.

River

FLOWS IN YOU

By MARY BETH OOSTENBRUG

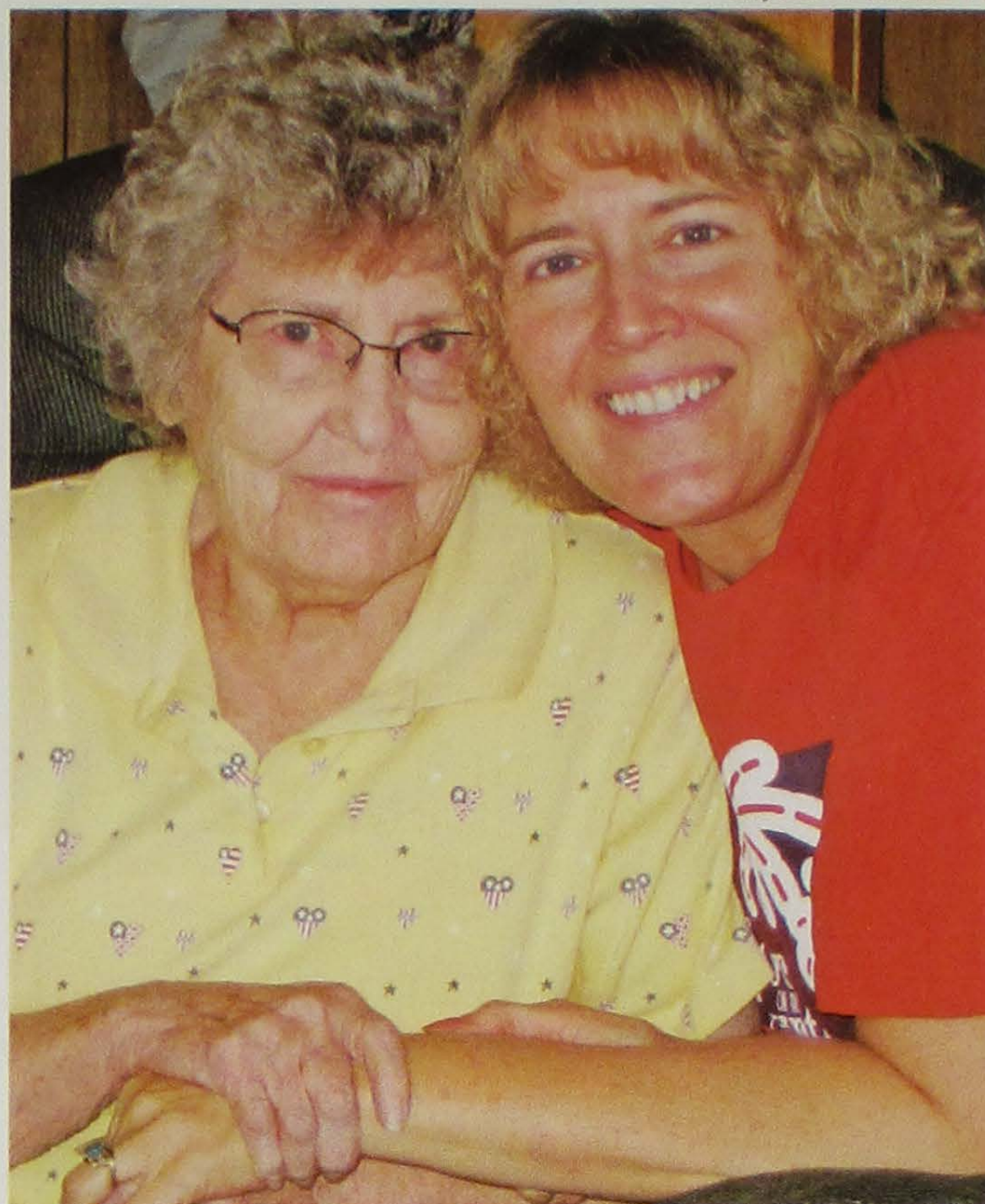
The piano looked as if it was standing in the center of an island. There was no one in the large room except for the pianist. Empty sofas and chairs were evidence that the day was ending. The room was dimly lit with only a tiny lamp directed at the sheet music. Except for the sound of the waterfall sculpture, her music filled the still air. It was a lovely melody with repeating measures, sad at times, yet soft and beautiful. She played it somewhat haltingly, occasionally stumbling on a note. Mostly, the notes flowed easily, causing my mind to drift toward tranquility. Ah, this was a serene place to be, hearing soft music as I rested in a chair. My breathing slowed, my shoulders relaxed, the stress started to leave my body. After the song ended, we clapped, appreciating the private recital. The young woman looked up at us, smiled and shrugged her shoulders. "I have a concert next month and I haven't played since junior high school," she said, apologetically. She was a medical student, practicing on a baby grand piano that stood in one of the halls.

I asked what the title of the song was. "River Flows In You," she answered. She went on, "It's on YouTube." The technological reference jarred me away from this oasis and back into reality, the reality of accessing medical care for my elderly mother.

Mom and I had stopped to listen as I pushed her wheelchair through the hallways of the large clinic, toward our hotel room. It was evening and we were exhausted from our second day of nonstop medical tests. Mom needed me to push her to all the different areas of the clinic, help her undress and redress for each test, and assist her getting in and out of the wheelchair. Just like the song's measures repeated themselves, we had repeated those activities throughout the two days. My wrists were sore from pushing the wheelchair and I was tired of speaking loudly so she could hear me. I was missing several days from my job, away from my husband, and sleeping in a strange bed near my mother, who moaned throughout the night as she turned over in bed onto her broken arm. Like sad parts of the melody, it was sad to see her go through this ordeal of preparing for surgery a second time, because the first time her bones were too old to heal.

But the music called me to stop, listen, and to let myself go to a better place. As I relaxed, the music soothed my spirit and I retraced our steps that day. We had laughed when we realized those two men in the waiting room weren't traveling salesmen, but physicians from a foreign country, sent to examine her arm! We sipped mocha drinks and nibbled on scones, something we had never experienced together. We giggled like young girls when I hooked the dress rack on the wheelchair and almost made it tip over. The day hadn't been so bad after all. My mom and I had shared many special moments. I began to feel the blessing of being here with her.

Like a river, her blood flows inside me. Her spirit is young, strong and deep. She gave me life and taught me to love, to laugh and to cry. The pianist played imperfectly, reminding me that life is imperfect, causing old women to break bones and younger women to miss their husbands. But also like a river, life continues, flowing, with beauty running throughout its entirety. This moment filled with music, memories and blessings, was one I wouldn't trade for anything. The river in me was overflowing with gratitude, love and now, peace.



Mary Beth Oostenbrug, right, is pictured with her mother, Mary Oostenbrug.

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A mother's MEMORIES

By PEGGY BEST

Now I don't know about you, but when I think back to when I was a young mother, I seem to have an easier time rousing up memories of times when I made mistakes or handled situations in a "less mature" way than I would today. I think women, in general, tend to be harder on themselves than they ever would be with anyone else. As an empty nester, I definitely remember times when I wish I'd have more patience and definitely more time with my children. I seem to remember, in every vivid and colorful detail, when I made bad choices or wished I would have handled a situation differently. The "not so perfect" moments rise to the surface so much more quickly than the times when things did go right—those precious, fun, goofy times we shared with our kids. I grew up with "Leave it to Beaver" and "Father Knows Best," and not once did I see those moms raise their voices or fail to have the perfect solution to every situation their kids were facing. They were always able to solve any problem in less than 30 minutes. Now that's pretty tough to live up to. It may be easy to remember the trip to Disneyland or the trip to the Grand Canyon, but think about those normal days and simple things that happened that are just so precious yet so easily forgotten.

I recall the time I took my son to the Iowa State University Dairy farm to bottle-feed the baby goats. How much fun we had, and because it was a very hot day, I took him to the Dairy Queen for ice cream afterwards. We were filthy dirty and didn't realize how much we smelled like goats. Boy, did we stink! The DQ on Lincoln Way had an outside order window, so thankfully we spared the patrons inside by ordering there and sitting at one of the outside tables, but the looks we got from people walking by was hilarious. We would chuckle and before we knew it, we were laughing like crazy. I'm sure people thought we were nuts and really in need of hot showers too!

Then there was the time at McDonalds when we stopped for ice cream cones. I had four kids in tow that day, and one of the them was talking and goofing off and when he took a bite, missed his mouth and got ice cream on his face. The other kids were laughing and teasing, and before long another re-enacted it on purpose. We all started laughing, and before we knew it, we all had ice cream on our faces and were laughing so hard we had tears running down our cheeks. We had the kind of laugh that is hard to come by — your face contorts and you just can't stop. I'm surprised we didn't get tossed out of McDonald's that day, but oh the memory of face-altering laughter. What a cool memory and wouldn't it do us all some good to have a laugh like that every once in awhile?

Now on the other end of the spectrum, when I think about my relationship with my mom and growing up, I instantly remember the good. Growing up on a farm wasn't always easy but the memories I think of were good ones. Even though the times were filled with chores, long days of butchering chickens, walking beans, or laundry day when we had to boil water and use the old wringer washer. Those are good memories.

I wonder if when my mom thought back when us kids were little, she was critical of herself also. I'm thinking that perhaps it's a cycle that mothers go through. We remember the things we'd like to do over, our children remember the good times. Sure, we'd all like to go back and do things over again — better — but guess what moms? We can't go back — we can only go forward. So brew a nice cup of hot tea, get comfortable, and drum up in the old memory bank those fun, goofy times. It'll make you smile, and hopefully, laugh out loud.

AMES Woman's CLUB

still going
strong after
94 years

By MARY HALSTRUM
Facets Editor



PHOTO BY Ronnie Miller

Members of the Ames Woman's Club include: (front, from left) Barbara Osterloo, historian, Catherine James, second vice president; (back, from left) La Von Brown, treasurer, Donna Luchan, first vice president, and Evon Trcka, president.

Organized in 1915, the Ames Woman's Club has long been a community leader in helping those in need whether it's raising money for scholarships, donating cookies to the Boys & Girls Club, clipping coupons for ACCESS or collecting box tops for local schools, the club does what it can to help the community at large.

The club is currently conducting its annual membership drive in search of new members to join the local service group. The club has more than 90 members, ranging in age from 50 on up, but is interested in attracting some younger members.

"We understand that younger women have busy, hectic schedules, and might not have the time," said Donna Luchan, first vice president, a 20-year member.

Treasurer La Von Brown, a 20-year club member, recounted a time when the bowling department gave money to help a single mother who had lost her job.

Luchan said she derives satisfaction from helping people in the community. "It just makes you feel good when you can help people," she said.

The club's annual salad luncheon was March 27 with all the proceeds going toward two \$1,000 scholarships the group awards to deserving students.

Along with the salad luncheon, the club hosts several fundraising events throughout

the year, including a fashion show and luncheon in the fall, a soup and pie supper in January or February, a May luncheon and a Christmas party.

General meetings are held once a month from August through May, with time off for the summer. Members are welcome to join any number of departments such as bowling, bridge, hobbies, games and fellowship, money managers investment club, travel study, and home and community. Dues are \$35 a year.

The Ames Woman's Club's clubhouse is at 106 S. Dakota Ave. The club began its building fund in 1924 and the clubhouse has been mortgage free for years. Eleven-year member Evon Trcka, club president, said the club garners a fee from U.S. Cellular's rental of cell tower space on the club's property. The clubhouse is also available for rental for occasions such as bridal/baby showers and graduation parties.

For more information about the Ames Woman's Club, call Trcka at (515) 232-5693.



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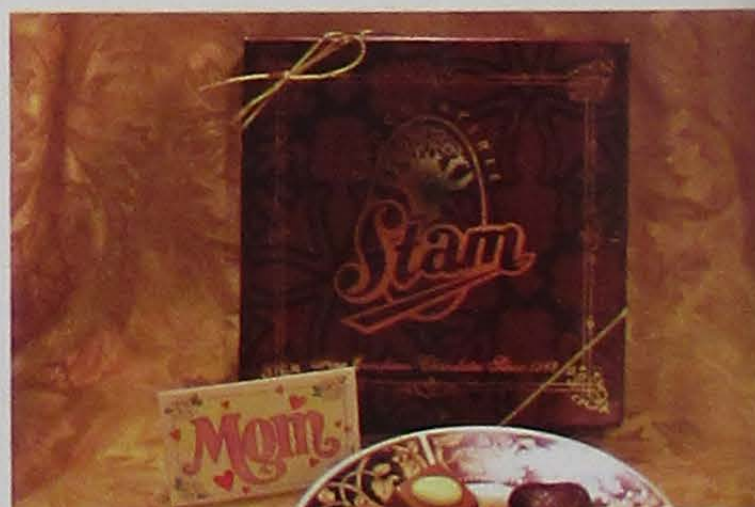
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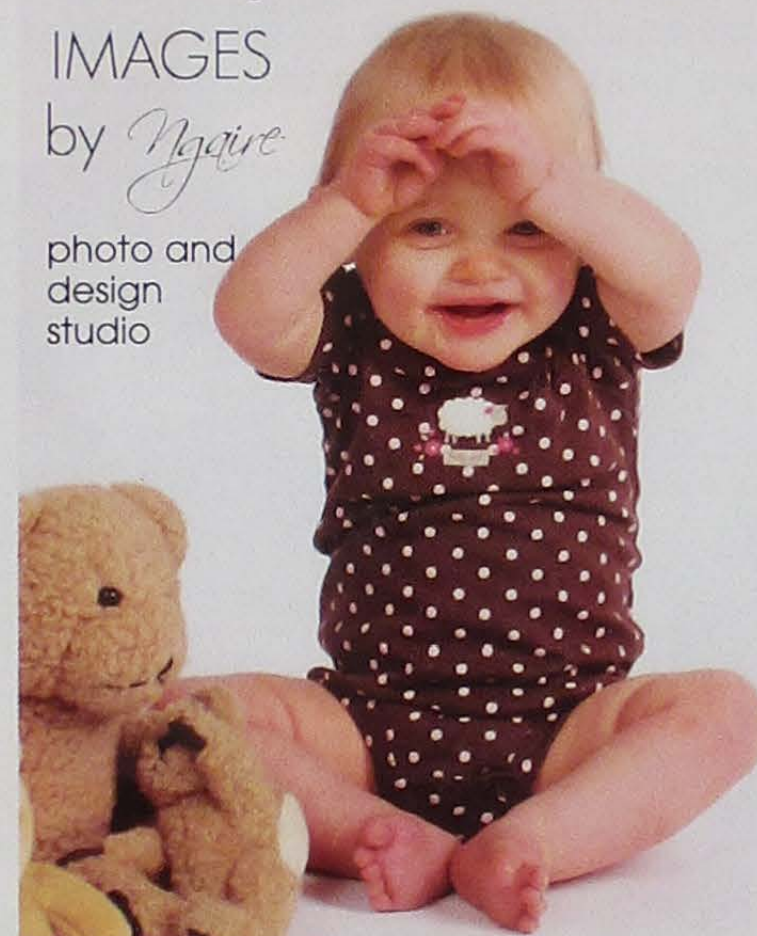
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On bended KNEE

By SUE ULLESTAD

It was Oct. 13, 1999, the night of Luke's 12th birthday. We had just been bowling and to the driving range. Luke had a jumbo pop, a large Gatorade, lots of water, and was still thirsty. We were on our way to Luke's favorite restaurant, when I looked in the back seat of the car and found Luke asleep. I knew then that he wasn't feeling well. He had told me earlier in the week he had gotten up during the night to go to the bathroom eight times. I remembered him saying that sometimes his stomach "burned" during or after a meal. Something was very wrong.



The next morning getting ready for school, Luke came into my bathroom shirtless to get a washcloth. I noticed his ribs protruding. He looked so thin that I asked him to get on the scale. He had lost 15 pounds. I thought he must have something awful like cancer. My heart dropped to my feet. I panicked and tears welled up. I called my husband.

We went to school anyway. I taught at a school in Boone and Luke caught the bus to the Sixer's building at United. Upon telling my school secretary, she immediately called the McFarland Clinic in Ames. Our pediatrician could see Luke at 11 or 4. I was going to teach

the full day and take the later appointment but our secretary said to take the 11. She knew what it was from the symptoms I had described. When I called to talk to the nurse, she said to pack a suitcase as we would probably be staying in the hospital that night. My throat tightened and my stomach churned.

As I drove to pick up Luke, my thoughts raced. It could be diabetes, they said. What does that mean for my son? I said a quick prayer, "Help us, Lord." Luke's teacher said that he was in art class. We both went to the art room door and saw Luke with his head down on his desk. He was very weak, but was able

to get to the car. He said he was glad that I had come, put his head back onto the seat and fell asleep.

His dad met us there. Blood tests. Waiting. The doctor said the blood tests had confirmed that Luke had Type 1 Diabetes. Luke's blood sugars were 675. Luke looked puzzled and so were we. The doctor assured us that his blood sugars could be brought down slowly and safely in the hospital. Luke was taken away quickly by wheelchair; we walked bewildered through the sterile halls to his room.

As Luke got into his pajamas, my eyes scanned the room. Two empty baby beds with nets over the top were pushed over to the side. My mind flashed back to my nights in the hospital when I was four in a bed such as those. I remember how I wanted mom to stay with me but she couldn't. I definitely would stay with Luke. The nurse assured me that I could sleep on the pull-out couch in Luke's room.

We talked with the doctor. He explained more about diabetes and said that we would have appointments with the diabetic educator to answer further questions and to get us started on a health care routine. He asked Luke to explain diabetes in his own words. "It is when your body doesn't make any more insulation." A little comic relief. The IV drip was started. Sister and dad went home, and Luke and I tried to sleep through the nurses' and lab technician's interruptions. I vividly recall pure panic surging through me. I sat up straight in bed as I remembered that an acquaintance had died young from complications from diabetes. Only prayer would calm me that night and many more to come.

The next day brought more education about counting carbs, insulin, shots and preventing highs and lows. Luke had to practice finger pricks and using a glucometer and a syringe. Rod and I had to practice saline injections into oranges and to each other. Luke was encouraged to do his own injections, and he did. We were so proud of him ... his positive attitude and his responsibility right away for his own health. Little did we know then that this disease would mature him quickly and help him become even more spiritual. Grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins visited Luke. One aunt offered to stay in my place overnight with Luke, but I needed to be there.

Still I had much anxiety and many questions. I was asking the doctor another question when I broke down and cried. He led me into a quiet place and listened to all of my worries. Typical of a concerned mother I asked, "Would Luke get complications from diabetes later in life? Would anyone want to marry him? Would he be able to get a job? Would he be able to do all the sports he loved so dearly? Would he be able to go on a family

vacation to Hawaii? I was a wreck and the doctor tried to console me.

We went home a little numb from all that we had been through. Luke said it would be just another thing to do every day like brushing his teeth. His positive outlook amazed me. He checked his blood sugars six or more times a day. He gave himself shots three or four times a day. He continued with all his sports and other activities just as before. I took him to his appointment with the diabetic educator every three months. I took many notes and read the book she recommended. Can I deal with what is happening to my

son? She said to watch for nighttime lows, especially after exertion in the evening as he could slip into a coma. She said to check him around 3 a.m. After games, I would set my alarm and feel Luke's hands to see if they were clammy. I would most often awaken him to have him check himself with the meter. I found myself waking up around 2 or 3 a.m. many nights to check on him. I tossed and turned when he stayed overnight at a friend's house and called to make sure he had a juice box by his bed just in case if he had a low during the night. I was continually asking him his blood sugar number. I reminded him to take a snack

or a Gatorade wherever he went. I couldn't keep this up. I had to let go. I prayed for help. The Lord gradually convinced me to give the worry to Him.

Through the years, Luke has experienced high blood sugars and lows, changes in insulin, and changes in activity level. He has had fairly good A1C blood test, which shows how well his diabetes has been managed. Now at 21, he takes his disease in stride. He and God can handle it together every step of the way. This mom, like many other moms when their children have troubles, still falls to her knees and prays for her son.

Pregnancy can bring about problematic skin changes

By KATHY COOK, M.D.

In May of 2006, I wrote an article for Facets about normal skin changes during pregnancy. The focus of this article is on the effect of pregnancy on skin disease that already exists and on rashes that occur because of pregnancy.

Psoriasis affects up to 3 percent of the population. In pregnant females, about 55 percent will have improvement in their psoriasis, which may be due to high estrogen levels. Twenty-three percent of women get worse and 65 percent have a flare up of psoriasis after delivery. Twenty percent of pregnant women have no change in their psoriasis.

Acne is very common and activity is unpredictable in pregnancy with some improving and some getting worse. There are fewer treatment choices for acne during pregnancy due to concerns about the effect of medications on the fetus.

Moles may get larger and darker in approximately 6 percent of pregnant women. Any changing mole needs to be evaluated because melanoma (cancerous mole) can occur at any time of life. If a melanoma is diagnosed during pregnancy, the placenta should be checked at the time of birth for any evidence of melanoma.

Sarcoidosis usually improves during pregnancy but can relapse in the postpartum period. Systemic lupus does have an increased risk of spontaneous abortion and fetal death and the baby faces a risk of neonatal lupus.

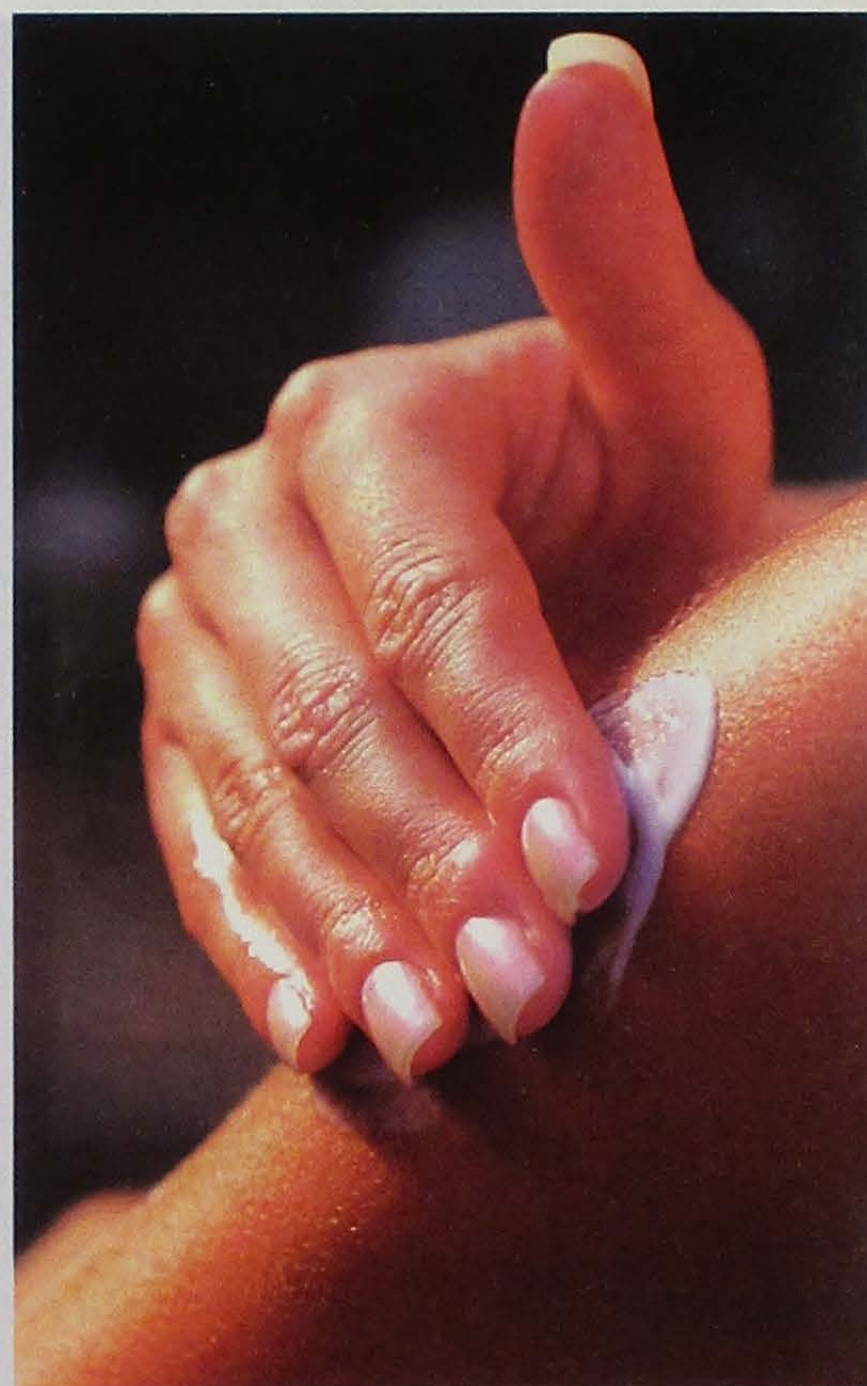
There is also a set of rashes that occur specifically because of pregnancy and have been grouped into four main types. The common presenting symptom is an itch. It is estimated that 18 percent of pregnant women develop itching. Usually the itch is associated

with some other skin disease such as contact allergy, eczema, or even scabies that have nothing to do with the pregnancy. The rashes that are due to pregnancy will be briefly described below.

- The most common is polymorphic eruption of pregnancy previously termed PUPP (pruritic papules and plaques of pregnancy). This occurs in one out of 160 pregnancies. This most commonly occurs in first-time mothers and those with rapid weight gain, which may be a factor in causing inflammation of stretch marks. The rash often starts in stretch marks on the abdomen in the last part of the third trimester. This generally goes away by 10 days after delivery. It is treated with antihistamines and topical steroids to relieve the itch. There is no risk for the mother or baby.

- The next most common is prurigo of pregnancy occurring in one in 300 pregnancies. These are small flesh-colored bumps that are frequently excoriated on the arms, legs and trunk starting in the second or third trimester. There is debate if this actually represents eczema. Many, 75 percent, never have had eczema in the past. There is no effect on the baby. Treatment is symptomatic with antihistamines and topical steroids.

- Cholestasis of pregnancy occurs in 1 in 1,500 births in North America. Women with multiple fetuses are more likely to be affected. This presents with generalized itching in the last trimester that is worse at night and on the trunk, palms and soles. Some women will develop jaundice (yellow skin color). There will be abnormal blood tests with elevated bile acids. There are other diseases to consider with this with the most common being viral hepatitis. The amount of risk to the baby is controversial.



- Pemphigoid gestationis is the least common with 1 in 50,000 pregnancies being affected. It occurs in late pregnancy with itching and a rash that rapidly progresses to blisters. This will clear up after pregnancy and often recurs with another pregnancy with more severity. There is a risk of premature birth, smaller babies and blistering lesions on the baby.

If there is a rash, it should be evaluated for common causes as well as these specific rashes that can be seen in pregnancy. For existing skin disease, it may be necessary to adjust treatments in pregnant women for better control, or to change medications to avoid ones that are not advised during pregnancy.

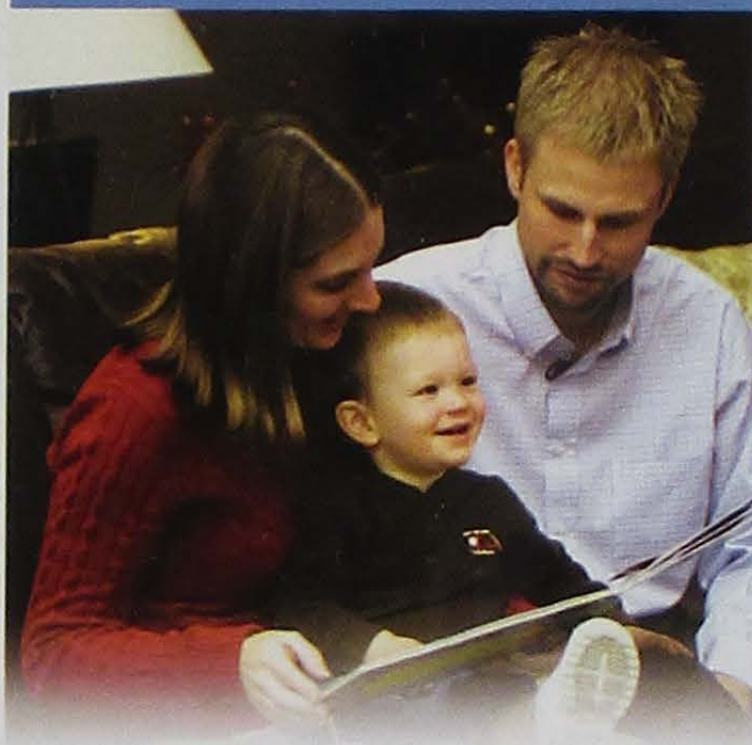
Kathy L. P. Cook, M.D., Board Certified Dermatologist, Skin Solutions Dermatology.

GIRLFRIEND'S GUIDE TO FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Just who will you be?

By KAREN PETERSEN

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Someone so unhappy
'Cause there is never enough*

From "Just Who Will You Be?"
by Maria Shriver

Shriver's message; money and things will not create a good life. She acknowledges this is hard because we live in a world that values wealth, even just the appearance of wealth, for some, seems a worthy goal.

As a mother and grandmother, I want my children and my grandchildren to hear:

- Don't focus on things and money.
- Use your talents to create a good life for yourself, your family and your community.

I talked with several local women about the messages they received from their parents and the messages they give their children.

DOLORES BROWN: Retired director of medical records at Mary Greeley Medical Center and mother of four daughters. She remembers the Great Depression. Even in that harsh economic situation, Brown and her two sisters went to college. Her father taught her about money and insisted, "An education is the best insurance policy."



Brown's husband's illness and inability to work was a strong influence on her young children. They learned that life can change overnight, the importance of an education, and the value of saving and not living beyond your means.

LYNNE VAN VALIN: Retired librarian and mother of two. She and her husband did not plan spending or saving; they just spent and saved based on their income and needs. "Fortunately, my children listened to what I said and not what I did. Our daughter and son follow a spending plan and our son is a disciplined saver."

VERONICA FOWLER: Gardener, freelance writer and mother of three. She learned about money and ego from her father. "I think my father was rather a bad businessman — he let his ego get in the way. In my business, I try to let my good business sense rule and not let ego and wishful thinking get in the way."

Fowler's mom was more responsible, but finances were out of her control. "I resolved to have a career so that I'd never be dependent solely on a man for financial support."

Fowler says, "I want my children to learn that while you shouldn't be a slave to your job and earning money; you should also be financially responsible and self-sufficient."

SUSAN POSCH: Writer and statistician at Iowa State University's Study Abroad Center, advisor, was an early saver. Posch's mother taught her to save a little of all money she received, and her school district helped each child open a passbook savings account in kindergarten.

"I want my children to learn that while you shouldn't be a slave to your job and earning money; you should also be financially responsible and self-sufficient."

'The Mother-Daughter Book Club' encourages reading

By MARISA MYHRE

Later in life, Posch learned to think like an investor, "I learned not to keep an eye on the funds as a miser would — don't check the stock prices daily, don't agonize over a drop in the interest rates. Everything goes in cycles, and so just ride it out."

Posch is a no nonsense advisor to her friend's children. "I answer financial questions — mostly about why they should bother saving (yes, I know you don't make very much each payday, but what happens when that job ends and you make even less?). And many questions about what to do about the mounting charges on their credit card statements (yes, it's true: if you only pay the minimum monthly amount, you'll be paying for that sound system for the rest of your life ...)."

MARY BETH OOSTENBRUG:

executive director of Friendship Ark Homes, mother of four. "My mother frequently used the phrase, "money doesn't grow on trees," when I asked her for something we couldn't afford. She also had limits on the amount she spent for specific occasions — weddings, baby gifts, birthday gifts, etc. Credit cards hadn't been invented yet so we only bought what we had already saved for."

I want my children to learn the importance of creating, and sticking to a budget, but also, the importance of donating to charity. I tell them, "There is always someone worse off than they are — someone who needs your help."

Money Lessons from Mom

- Have a spending plan; set limits on non-essential spending.
- Automate your savings.
- Use cash not credit. Save and buy, not buy and pay.
- Plan to support yourself; invest in education.
- Be a long-term investor; don't check the stock market daily.
- Share generously; some one less fortunate needs your help.

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For a long time I have been suggesting, begging and cajoling parents to read the books their children are picking up. This month I'm recommending a book that suggests just that even more strongly.

"The Mother-Daughter Book Club," by Shireen Dodson, was first published in 1996 and republished in 2007.

Dodson came up with the idea for a mother-daughter book club when she and a friend, both with adolescent daughters, were discussing how hard it was to communicate with their children. They both felt they were losing touch and didn't really know what the girls were thinking. Her friend mentioned that she didn't really have anything in common with her daughter, although they both did enjoy reading.

That's when it came to Dodson — a great way to connect with her daughter and hear some of her thoughts and even discuss some tough issues — a mother-daughter book club.

Dodson has done the club with two daughters of her own as well as many other mothers and daughters through the years. Some of the members are so close they still meet every year to catch up.

She brought together a group of women and their daughters to discuss the books. Her daughter asserts in the book that it gave her not only a chance to make friends with the girls, but also to have a support system through their mothers. She said she would never hesitate to pick up the phone and call one of the other girls' mothers if she needed help. It's a support system any mother would be happy to give her daughter.

It also encourages the habit of reading. Many mothers struggle with a way to give their children an enjoyment of reading. But by reading themselves and discussing the books, the mothers in this club could not only get a glimpse of their daughter's thoughts but also teach them the analytical reading skills needed in school.

Sprinkled in the book are "Books to Grow On." Anyone unsure about how to pick what books to read are provided with more than enough options throughout the book. From simple chapter books for new readers, to more advanced material, there are probably hundreds of suggestions in this book. Some of them are old favorites and some are very modern. They are grouped by topics ranging from books the author enjoyed as a child to books on coming of age or secret adventures.

For anyone nervous about how to get the conversation rolling, the author has provided help. In the back there are books listed including a synopsis, about how long it will take to read each, and discussion questions to help get a book club started.

The rest of the book lays out the way to start the book club and get it running. It gives tips for picking a meeting time and books to read to how to find the right people to join. Everything you could need to know is laid out very simply. Quotes and tips from various book members, both the adults and the children, are liberally layered in the book.

Even if you don't think you could make time once per month for a meeting or could interest your child in the time required to read the book it may be worth picking up this book just for the tips. There are great ways to start conversations and learn your child's opinions, even ways to broach difficult subjects. It could make it easy for you to pick up whatever book your child is reading, for fun or for school, and start a conversation on it.

Whether it's something that would make a good summer project or just bring you closer to your children through their reading I would suggest mothers pick up this book. If you don't know what to ask for for Mother's Day, maybe you should consider asking your kids for the gift of time spent reading and discussing these books.



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Compliments of Mom: Fresh baked memories

By JOLENE PHILO

A year and a half ago, Mom called to share a new recipe she'd found in her "Cooking for Two" magazine. "It's so easy," she said. "Get a piece of paper and write it down."

Since my life was way too busy for baking bread, I obeyed, mostly to humor her. But after a visit to Mom's house, when she sliced a piece for me to sample, the recipe joined my arsenal of favorites. I alter the recipe, substituting whole wheat flour for some of the white flour. The bread makes great toast and is our family's preferred choice for grilled sandwiches.

When Mom gave me the recipe, neither of us knew her upcoming diagnosis of Alzheimer's would put an end to her creativity in the kitchen. Now, every time I mix a batch of English muffin bread, I think of her recipes and the cooking tricks I want to pass on to my children.

This Mother's Day, I'm calling my children. "I have a recipe to share with you," I'll say. "Get a piece of paper and write it down." I hope they humor me.

English Muffin Bread

3 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups whole wheat flour
2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active
dry yeast
1 tablespoon sugar

2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
2 cups warm milk (120 - 130 degrees)
1/2 cup warm water (120-130 degrees)
Cornmeal

In a large mixing bowl, combine 2 cups all-purpose flour, yeast, sugar, salt and baking soda. Add warm milk and water; beat on low speed for 30 seconds, scraping bowl. Beat on high for 3 minutes. Stir in whole wheat flour and remaining all-purpose flour. Batter will be stiff. Do not knead.

Grease two 8-1/2 inch x 4-1/2 inch loaf pans and sprinkle the bottoms and sides with cornmeal. Pour batter into pans and sprinkle cornmeal on tops. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes. Make at 375 degrees or until golden brown. Remove from pans immediately and cool on wire racks.

MAY calendar

FRIDAY, MAY 1

Australian Chamber Orchestra – an internationally renowned ensemble that presents rousing performances to audiences around the world, Stephens Auditorium, 7:30 to 9 p.m., cost is \$43 to \$47 for adults, \$33 for ISU students and \$25 for children. For more information, call (515) 294-3347.

SATURDAY, MAY 2

Workshop: Silk Scarves – create a beautiful, impressionistic silk scarf using silk dyes. Iowa artist Sally Rasmussen will teach you this fun and easy technique using silk dyes, shaving cream and a microwave. Class is from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Reiman Gardens. Cost is \$40 for CoHorts' members, \$45 for general public, and \$35 for ISU students. For more information, call (515) 294-2710.

Trunk Show with clothing designer and fiber artist Ginny McKeever

– McKeever will be showing her unique wrap jackets, kimonos and scarves from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Octagon Gallery Shop, Octagon Center for the Arts, 427 Douglas Ave., Ames. Admission is free. For more information, call (515) 232-5331.

MONDAY AND TUESDAY, MAY 4 TO 5

Whispers & Screams Annual Conference – an annual conference sponsored by the Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force. The conference has brought girls' voices and experiences to the forefront and disseminated information and suggestions for gender-specific programming that have been implemented across the state. Cost is from \$20 to \$150 depending on which parts of the conference are attended. Conference is at Gateway Center in Ames. For more information, call (515) 281-6915.

THURSDAY, MAY 7

Kenny Chesney, with Miranda Lambert and Lady Antebellum – country concert kicks off at 7:30 p.m. at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines. Tickets are \$21 to \$99 and are available at the Wells Fargo Arena ticket office, all Dahl's Foods, online at dahlstickets.com, or by phone (866)-55-DAHLS. There is a 6-ticket limit for the general public.

SATURDAY, MAY 10

Crochet & Knitting Group – Tweens, teens and adults are invited to crochet and knit at the Ames Public Library, 515 Douglas Ave., on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. Everyone is welcome from beginners to experts. Bring projects/supplies if you have them. Some supplies are available for beginners.

SUNDAY, MAY 10

Mother's Day at Reiman Gardens – Bring your mother to Reiman Gardens on Mother's Day as admission is free for mothers and CoHorts' members, price of admission for general public. For more information, call (515) 294-2710.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

Women and Philanthropy, Creating Your Philanthropic Footprint – workshop keynote presentations by Renata Rafferty Consulting, Indian Wells, Calif., and Pamela Davidson Gift Design, Bloomington, Ind. Workshop will be at Scheman Building, Iowa State Center, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., cost is \$30. For more information, call (515) 294-4607.

SATURDAY, MAY 16

The 2009 Iowa Blues Challenge – head-to-head competition culminating in a four-band final round, Hotel Fort Des Moines, 1000 Walnut St., Des Moines.

Nature Journaling workshop

– Being in nature an opening our eyes to the natural world allows us to escape the bustle of our daily lives. Workshop is from 10 a.m. to noon at Reiman Gardens. Cost is \$12 for CoHorts' members, \$15 for general public, and \$7.50 for ISU students. Registration and prepayment are required. For more information, call (515) 294-2710.

TUESDAY, MAY 19

Floral Design Series workshop – Create your own unique floral arrangement to take home at Reiman Gardens from 7 to 9 p.m. Cost is \$26 for CoHorts' members, \$32.50 for general public and \$19.50 for ISU students. Registration and prepayment are required. For more information, call (515) 294-2710.

ONGOING

Lynn Kaiser Trio – from 5 to 7 p.m., Fridays, Hilton Garden Inn, 1325 Dickinson Ave., Ames.

Scottish Country Dance classes

– from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., Fridays, second floor dance studio, Octagon Center for the Arts, 427 Douglas Ave., Ames, call Gayle at (515) 233-6841.

ISU Ballroom Dance Club social – from 7:30 to 9:45 p.m., Fridays, 196 Forker, ISU campus, Ames, free.

Argentine Tango – from 4 to 4:30 p.m. introduction and beginning figure, 4:30 to 7 p.m. open dancing and intermediate figure, Sundays, Workspace, ISU Memorial Union, Ames, punch cards: \$28 ISU students for five punches, \$30 public for five punches.

Latin dance lessons – from 8 to 9 p.m., through March 30, call (515) 232-5507 or (515) 233-2185.

Square dance lessons – from 7 to 9 p.m., First Christian Church Disciples of Christ, 611 Clark Ave., Ames, call Fred Grow at (515) 432-7530.

Iowa Artists 2009 – Des Moines Art Center, 800 Walnut St., Des Moines, through May 22.

"Bodyscapes & Counterpoints: Prints of Beej Nierengarten-Smith," – through May 12, Christian Petersen Art Museum, Morrill Hall, ISU campus, Ames, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, free with \$3 suggested donation.

"Contemplate Japan," – through Aug. 9, Brunnier Art Museum, Scheman Building, Ames, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, free with \$3 suggested donation.

Oriental Snuff Bottles from the Permanent Collection – through Aug. 9, Brunnier Art Museum, entrance cases, Scheman Building, Ames, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, free with \$3 suggested donation.

"The Early Years: The Founding Model Farm and the College," – Farm House Museum, ISU campus, Ames, noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"Campus Cottages on the Iowa State Campus," 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, Special Collections Reading Room, 403 Parks Library, ISU campus, Ames, free.

Mamie Doud Eisenhower Birthplace – 709 Carroll Street, Boone, 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday during April and May, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, \$4 adults, \$1 ages 6 to 17, free under age 6.

meet a faceted woman



Mary Halstrum

Age: 40

Position: Facets Editor/A&E Editor

Family: Husband Kevin, a carpenter, two daughters, Katharine, 7, and Rachel, 3.

What would you do with \$1,000 to spend on yourself? Spend it on my girls, and then treat myself to a spa visit.

Your favorite meal: Mongolian beef and steamed rice.

I never leave home without: My sunglasses. I hate to squint.

Your favorite motto: What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

What makes you happy? Hanging out with my family.

What makes you laugh? I laugh a lot at a lot of different things. Life is pretty funny except when it's not.

Best tip to look and feel great: Smile as much as possible.

If you could do or be anything you want, what would it be? A veterinarian.

If you knew then what you know now, what would you have done differently? Gone to business school.

How do you reward yourself? Getting a cup of coffee at Café Diem.

My idea of a nightmare job: Working outside.

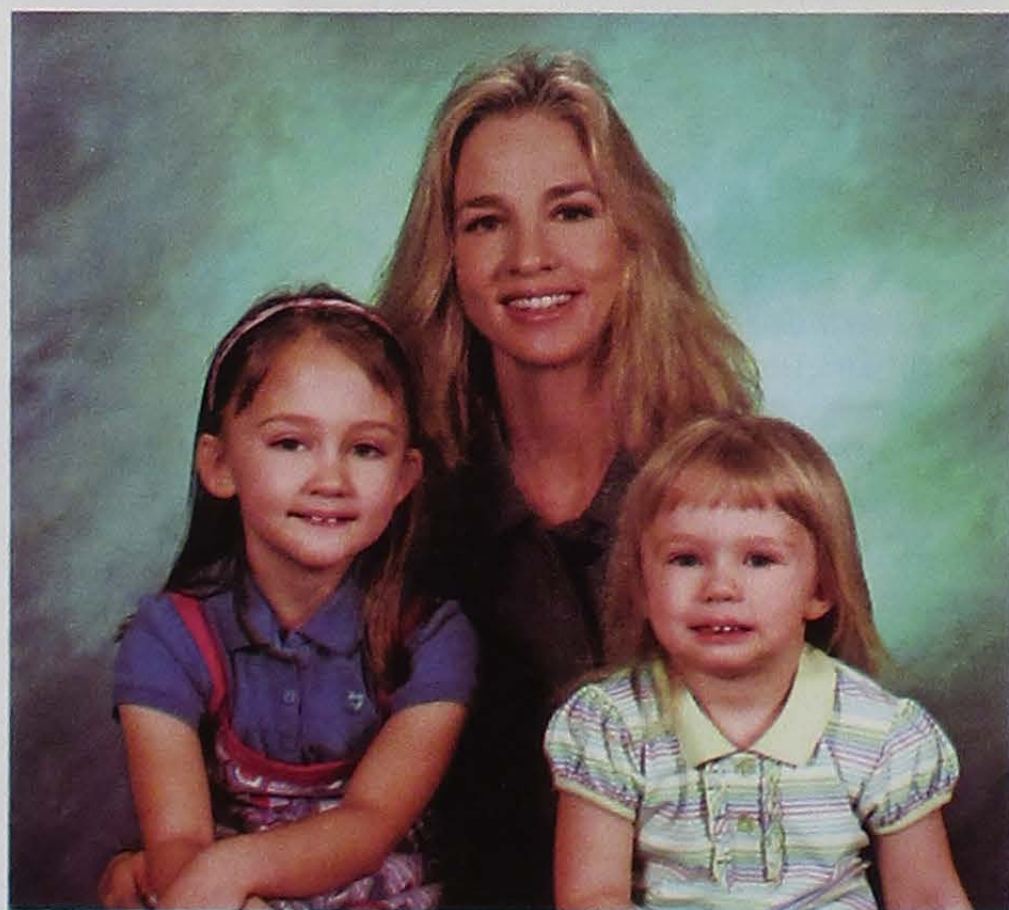
My simplest pleasure: Unwinding right before going to bed by reading my entertainment magazines.

When I am an old lady: I think I'll be pretty hip. At least I hope so for my daughters' sake.

Favorite wardrobe staple: Jeans and Vans tennis shoes.

What financial advice would you give other women? Start saving early.

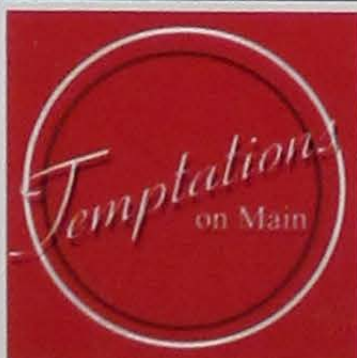
How do you give back to your community? I donate clothes and other things to charities.



What is your favorite kind of chocolate?

MARY HALSTRUM

I love dark chocolate. I also like peanut butter cups. I have at least one piece of chocolate every day.



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When John and Julie Dickerson decided to improve their home, they jumped in with both feet. With plans to transform a small bedroom into a large master suite, replace the roof and siding over the entire house, and add energy efficient windows, the Dickersons needed an experienced contracting team capable of handling a wide variety of jobs. Because they were financing the remodel with savings, they also needed a contractor who would stick to their budget and accommodate their request to perform some of the work themselves. The Ames Contracting Team was a perfect fit.

"Once they started that job, there was someone there all the time," John Dickerson explained. "Oren Geisinger is an awesome contractor and he has great people working with him. Holy smokes is he knowledgeable!"

The couple began by working with an ACT designer to help them plan the bedroom of their dreams at a price they could afford. The job involved moving the front of their house out 10 feet, adding a large walk-in closet and a luxurious new master bath. "There were a couple of things we changed our mind about after construction began," recalled Dickerson. "We said we wanted a larger shower. That meant moving a wall. Oren said no problem. We said we wanted a window in the bathroom. He said no problem. They were very accommodating. I am not a contractor. I don't know the jargon but he understood what we wanted. He is the easiest

guy in the world to work with and the entire crew was just great."

ACT devoted as much energy and care to the work performed on the home's exterior. "You would have to witness the roofers to believe it," Dickerson said. "My dad was a roofer. I spent a lot of time on roofs as a teenager. I have never seen a crew work harder in all my life." The entire roof was replaced in a single day and the clean-up was exceptional. "By the time they left that day there wasn't a nail left on the ground," Dickerson marveled, adding that the siding was replaced with speed and skill as well.

The Dickersons made the choice to perform some of the lighter-weight jobs themselves, tiling their bathroom, painting the home's interior, adding stone detail to the front of the house. While they enjoyed the tasks, it certainly intensified their appreciation for the efforts ACT had put forth. "Boy it was a lot of work!" laughed Dickerson, adding the sense of accomplishment was worth it.

With the entire project now complete, the home looks terrific from the street but the master suite is the real treasure for the Dickersons. "The walk-in closet turned out to be a real boon," Dickerson said. "It just keeps all the clutter out of the bedroom. It's more like a changing room than a closet." With an oversized shower in the new bathroom, more square footage throughout the room, and beautiful new windows, the entire master suite is a luxurious oasis.

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hue & cry

Definition: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.

By MARY HALSTRUM, *Facets Editor*

In honor of Mother's Day, this column will be devoted to outtakes from my life as a mother of two daughters, Katharine, 7, and Rachel, 3.

- I can never get too many kisses and hugs from my daughters.
- There really is no sweeter sound to me than the laughter of my children.
- Kissing a boo-boo and then hearing "It feels all better now, Mommy."
- Knowing that when either of my daughters says, "Let me help you," the task at hand will take me at least twice as long.
- I went to the store to buy my child's friend a birthday gift, then came home with the same toy for my own child even though it wasn't her birthday, Christmas, Easter or Valentine's Day.
- My oldest told me she needed me to carry her because her legs are tired, but not two minutes later she's running around the house chasing her little sister.
- The other day I found my youngest daughter

with cookie and milk all over the floor and all over her. I asked her what she did, and she replies, "I didn't do nothing," regardless of being caught red-handed.

- My oldest child thinks everything is open to negotiation.
- I dread the day my daughters will be too big to pick up and carry around in my arms.
- My oldest daughter told me the other day that when she grows up she's going to buy a big house so I can live with her forever. How I pray she'll always feel that way about me.
- My youngest daughter loves the sirens and lights on police cars, fire trucks and ambulances without linking them to something bad or tragic. She just appreciates them based solely on their pretty lights and the noise they make.
- Both of my girls absolutely love big, yellow school buses even though neither of them will ever ride on one on a regular basis if at all.
- My oldest daughter volunteers to give me foot massages complete with lotion and the

sock treatment.

- Every day when I drop my youngest off at daycare, she blows kisses to me out the window no matter what.
- Waking up every day to my daughters' beautiful faces is the greatest gift in the world. Sometimes it nearly brings me to tears thinking how much I love them. I will never love anything or anybody more than them.
- Wishing I could live forever so I could always be with them.
- Hearing my children cry, regardless of the cause, nearly rips my heart out.
- How one minute they want to hold my hand tight, and the next minute they're so independent they don't seem to need me.
- Wishing they wouldn't grow up quite so fast.
- Thinking of either of my daughters ever going on a spring break as a teenager or studying abroad as a college student gives me the willies.
- Hoping they both grow up to be happy, healthy, intelligent women, but knowing they'll always be my little girls.

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**Julia
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**Miriam
Patterson, RN**



**Joan
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**Marion
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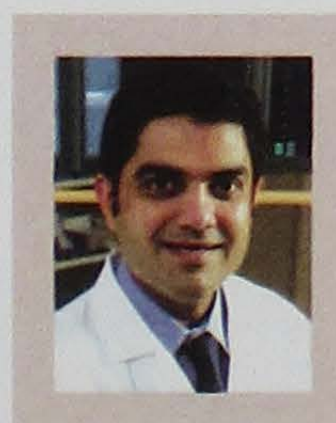
When Sue Bohner arrived at Mary Greeley Medical Center's Cardiac Catheterization Lab she was having a heart attack. Dr. Imran Dotani performed an angiogram and found two blockages. Working through a radial (wrist) artery, he placed two stents to restore blood flow to Sue's heart.

When Sue woke up, Dr. Dotani was there to explain the problem and the cure. "I couldn't be more pleased with the skill and care that saved my life," Sue remembers saying when she heard the extent of her blockages.

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Sue Bohner
*Heart attack
survivor*



"He was like a friend, taking time to ask and listen. He was concerned for the whole of my life. He wanted to know how family history, and work and everything else played together to create a heart attack."

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